OFF THE TRACK

...AND ON THE TABLE

Collective Bargaining Bulletin of Non-Academic Senate Faculty of the University of California

Non-Senate Collective Bargaining

Update

MARCH 1985

Negotiations for Non-Senate Faculty are progressing slowly, but improving. In our four two-day sessions since the first of the year, we have signed off on some small items, and given a full discussion to several larger issues, such as personnel files and layoff & transfer.

We have also received essential data regarding the members of our unit, as well as the University's 1984-1985 budget, which includes some surprising material we are thoroughly analyzing. We have been addressing several related issues which affect our members: the University's attempt to subcontract Subject A at the UC San Diego campus (by way of the communnity college district), and the question of which adjunct lecturers should appropriately be members of the bargaining unit. Subsequent issues of Off The Track will bring you up to date on these matters as well.

But the negotiations are impeded by the University's insistance that academic issues cannot be part of contract negotiations. They wrongfully assert that the law only binds them to discussing "wages, hours and working conditions." They claim that "working conditions" can be addressed without reference to what the work is that we do--which is teaching.

The most graphic evidence of their position is their reluctance to discuss academic freedom and responsibility. Our team has requested on three separate occasions that those items be brought to the top of the agenda, as they are essential to our role as academics.

Our position overall is that the "work" in "working conditions" has to be a subject of Negotiation, and that our "work"--teaching--necessarily brings up academic issues.

The University has proposed that layoff be entirely the prerogative of the University, that it need not consult with the union or its members about the necessity for laying off faculty, and that any faculty member could be laid off with 15 days notice.

For those of us that are teachers, these proposals contain a threat and an insult. They imply that our classes and the quality of our teaching are infinitely in danger, subject to arbitrary cancellation on 15 days notice. Cancellation of classes is an academic issue, and a union issue, and therefore must be a subject of negotiations.

For those of us that run field programs, or teacher education programs, the University's position suggests that our programs are expendable. But the elimination of programs is also an academic issue and must be negotiated with the union.

For those of us with tenure, the supervisors of physical education, the University's position implies not only that our courses and programs are superfluous, but that tenure is no longer tenure. Has tenure, too, become "academic"?

Slowly, the University is changing. Slowly, the University is willing to address the role of lecturers, acknowledge that non-senate faculty do the bulk of the undergraduate teaching at the University, that the University has in fact staffed permanent programs with people holding temporary titles. When this recognition fully occurs, we shall move rapidly towards reaching a strong and honest collective bargaining agreement.

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